

Breaking Down the

BARRIERS

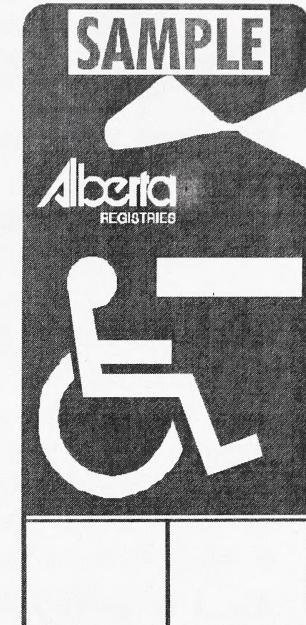
Alberta Transportation

October 2001

New Parking Placards Policy

Alberta Transportation and Alberta Government Services have been preparing to implement a new parking placards for persons with disabilities policy November 1, 2001. The departments have developed a new application form, a brochure highlighting the new policy changes, and information sheets for placard holders, approvers and enforcement authorities.

The departments also met recently with the Cities of Edmonton and Calgary to discuss their Disabled Parking Awareness Days, tentatively scheduled for late November 2001. Both departments will assist the cities in promoting their campaigns.



PARKING PLACARDS FOR
PERSONS WITH
DISABILITIES

NEW POLICY
AND
GENERAL INFORMATION

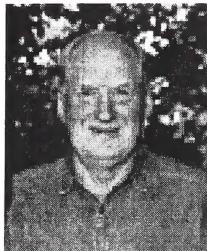


Watch for information about the new parking placards for persons with disabilities policy on Alberta Transportation's website at www.trans.gov.ab.ca

For more information, please contact:

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Profile – Member of the Advisory Committee on Barrier Free Transportation



Eugene Wauters

Farmer, Rancher, Politician

Director, District 1

Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties

How did you become interested in transportation issues?

Having lived my entire life on a mixed irrigation farm in southern Alberta where our livelihood was derived from manual labor, raising crops and livestock, I was able to witness the evolution of transportation from horses to modern vehicles. My only interest in transportation at that time was that it was a necessity to access urban services, as I had walked to school during the first six years of my schooling. It was not until I became involved in municipal politics that I became aware that not everyone is fortunate enough to be able to easily access the modes of transportation that are available.

What is your role on the Barrier Free Committee and why did you become involved?

Through my involvement as a municipal councilor, I was elected to represent District One for the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties. In that capacity I was appointed to represent rural Alberta on the Advisory Committee on Barrier Free Transportation. I have done so for the past three years.

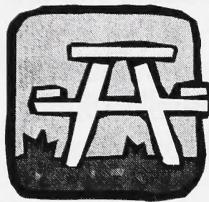
What are the major concerns or issues you have related to accessible transportation?

As a representative for rural Albertans, I find myself bringing a rural perspective to the committee. Rural Albertans of all ages experience the same disabilities as their urban counterparts. Due to demographics and the lack of commercial transportation, residents in rural areas are increasingly moving to urban centres to access services and participate in community activities so that they do not

have to impose on family or friends. It is the continued population relocation that has overtaxed urban systems and represents a challenge to supply efficient and affordable transportation to those that require that service.

I am looking forward to my continued participation on the Barrier Free Committee.

Alberta Partnership Rest Area Program – Helping Drivers to “Take a Break!”



Drivers travelling on Alberta's highways will have more opportunities to take a break thanks to the Partnership Rest Area Program. Alberta Transportation and rural highway businesses are collaborating on this program to provide designated rest areas along Alberta's highways.

"The public, safety organizations and various highway users have asked for more and better rest areas and we listened to what they said," explained Ed Stelmach, Minister of Transportation. "This Partnership Rest Area Program is the result. We hope drivers will take a break and make use of Alberta's excellent rest areas."

Rural highway businesses participating in the program will be open 365 days a year. They will provide washrooms, parking, picnic tables, and travel information to the public without charge and must follow Alberta Transportation rest area guidelines. Businesses are also encouraged to provide barrier-free access for persons with disabilities. Alberta Transportation will oversee the program, post highway signs guiding travellers to Partnership Rest Areas and indicate Partnership Rest Areas on the Official Alberta Road Map.

For more information, please contact the Department at 1-866-462-3380.



Did You Know?

On September 6, 2001 a special LRT train burst through a paper banner to inaugurate the upgraded Clareview Transit Centre. The \$12 million project was a joint initiative between the City of Edmonton (20 per cent) and the Province of Alberta (80 per cent).

The new Clareview Transit Centre includes the LRT station, a new bus terminal on the west side, an upgraded bus terminal on the east side, and three parking lots which increase capacity from 650 to 1,400 stalls including more designated stalls. A special DATS loading and unloading area is also provided. The new LRT station has the capacity to handle five-car trains (the current maximum is four-car trains) and is fully accessible to persons with disabilities.

For more information, please visit Edmonton Transit System's website at:
<http://www.gov.edmonton.ab.ca/transit/>

Is Obesity a Disability?



The Canadian Transportation Agency has been holding hearings in Calgary into the question of whether obesity is a disability for the purposes of the accessibility provisions contained in Part V of the **Canada Transportation Act**.

Should the Agency find that obesity is a disability, it will then deal with a complaint made by Ms. Linda McKay-Panos of Calgary in 1997, after having to pay Air Canada for 1.5 seats.

The case has implications for the current policy of the airline industry whereby persons with disabilities must pay an additional half fare when bringing along a bona fide attendant.

For more information, please contact:

Elizabeth Barker
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Canadian Transportation Agency
Phone: (819) 997-9325



UPDATE **Accessible Taxis in Edmonton**

On August 28, 2001, City Council voted to put at least 10 wheelchair accessible taxis on the street by June 2002.

Council has asked that the city administration provide a report for its review this November which looks into questions such as who will provide the cabs and who will pay the operating costs.

The Edmonton Taxi Cab Commission has also been instructed to find a way for the taxi industry to provide a financially viable taxi service.

On September 14, 2001, the Alberta Human Rights and Citizenship Commission advised that the original complaint made by Ms. Donna Martyn would be considered by a Panel.

For more information, please contact:

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Edmonton Transit System
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Did You Know?

The Canadian Abilities Foundation has recently launched a new book, "Making a Difference: Profiles of Abilities" by Daryl Rock. The book profiles well-known and not-so-well-known Canadians with disabilities through inspirational stories.

The publication, sponsored by Millennium Bureau of Canada, Scotiabank and Delta Hotels, is the latest of several disability-related books and resources published by the Canadian Disabilities Foundation.

To order your copy, please contact the Foundation at 1-888-700-4476 or visit their website at www.enablelink.org/MakeADif/Wel.htm

Cross Ministry Seniors Policy Initiative

Alberta Transportation is participating in the Seniors Policy Initiative, a cross-ministry priority of the Government of Alberta in 2001-02. The initiative's goal is to promote collaboration in planning and preparing for Alberta's aging population.

Key aspects of both current and future seniors' lives are being considered in the initiative, including income, housing, health care, and transportation. Alberta Transportation co-chairs the subgroup that is looking at supportive communities, accessible transportation, and aging drivers.

For more information, please visit the Ministry of Seniors website at www.seniors.gov.ab.ca (go to "Policy & Planning") or contact:

Isobel Lawson
Senior Policy Co-ordinator
Alberta Seniors
Phone: (780) 427-6566
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Did You Know?

October is Community Living Awareness month. The goal is to enhance opportunities for people with developmental disabilities to participate fully in community life.

The campaign is sponsored by the Alberta Association for Community Living and the Provincial Board for Persons with Developmental Disabilities.

For more information on activities and events, please contact:

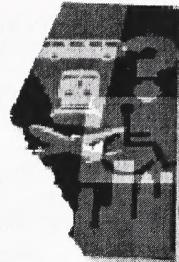
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UPDATE : Transport Canada's Web Portal

Transport Canada, in conjunction with other partners, is developing a web "portal" that will offer information on accessible transportation services; support for e-business transactions; an advanced search capability; technical and content support; a travel guide; a discussion board; and links to other sites.

Alberta Transportation was recently consulted by Transport Canada regarding its **Alberta Inter-community Public Transportation Guide**, which provides information on bus, air and rail services (including accessibility). The Alberta Guide can be found at:

www.trans.gov.ab.ca



For more information on the federal initiative, please contact:

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Policy Advisor, Accessible Transportation
Transport Canada
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Did You Know?

The proceedings from the **Inclusion By Design: Planning The Barrier-Free Word** conference held on June 1-5, 2001 are now available at www.ccrw.org. The website contains materials from all presentations made at the conference including Alberta Transportation's presentation on the Alberta Advisory Committee on Barrier Free Transportation.

Breaking Down the Barriers is published by Alberta Transportation to provide information about transportation issues of interest to persons with disabilities and related organizations. It is distributed to municipalities, service providers, provincial organizations and consumer groups in Alberta. To be added to the distribution list, please phone (780) 427-7944 or dial 310-0000 for a toll free connection outside Edmonton. The views and opinions expressed in **Breaking Down the Barriers** do not necessarily reflect those of the Editorial Board or Alberta Transportation. Any article in this publication may be reproduced, provided credit is given to the newsletter.

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